

Item 11
Telegram (Open) To be kept in locked file.

Special Train EUROPA	5 July 1941	0.17 hours
Arrival	5 July 1941	1.10 hours

No. 598

- 1.) Code Bureau
- 2.) German Embassy Tokyo
(Telegram Cipher, secret cipher process)

Remark: Sent to Tokyo under No. 981, Tel. Ktr., 5.7.41.

At the occasion of the discussion concerning Japan's attitude towards Soviet Russia, I wish to rectify below for your own orientation what MATSUOKA has told you at the time concerning my conference, with him about the conclusion of a Japanese-Russian Pact of Non-Aggression or Neutrality.

As you reported in your telegram No. 685 of 6 May 1941, MATSUOKA told you at that time that after his departure from Berlin, he did not at first consider the possibility of concluding a Japanese-Russian Treaty of Neutrality. He said he had even brought this up in his conversation with me merely stating his willingness to accept in case Russia was willing to conclude such a pact. By talking to you in this way, MATSUOKA obviously wanted to say that I would have had to reckon with the conclusion of the Treaty after the conversations at Berlin.

After agreement had been reached on the conclusion of the treaty and immediately before it was formally signed, MATSUOKA also informed Count SCHULENBURG in Moscow in a similar vein. At this occasion Mr. MATSUOKA described his conversations with me at Berlin as follows: He had told me that while at Moscow he would probably not be able to avoid touching upon the long pending question of a Japanese-Russian treaty of neutrality or non-aggression. He would, of course, show no empressement whatever, but should the Russians comply with Japan's wishes, he would be obliged to do something. I had consented to this trend of thought.

Neither the description made to you nor that made to Count SCHULENBURG corresponds to the facts. The subject of a Japanese-Soviet Treaty of Non-Aggression or Neutrality has been touched upon by MATSUOKA and myself in our conversation of 28 March 1941, in the following way, according to the memorandum made immediately after the conversation by Minister SCHMIDT:

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Following remark on the conclusion of a Japanese-Russian long-term trade agreement, MATSUOKA asked me directly whether during his return trip he should stop over in Moscow somewhat longer, in order to negotiate a Non-Aggression or Neutrality Pact. He stressed that the Japanese people would not allow a direct admittance of Russia into the Tri-Partite Pact, which would cause one cry of indignation all over Japan. I replied to MATSUOKA that the adherence of Russia to the Pact was out of the question and recommended that he not broach the previously mentioned question, i.e., the question of a Non-Aggression or Neutrality Pact with the Russians in Moscow, since this would not fit into the frame of the present situation. On MATSUOKA's further remark that the conclusion of a trade and fishery agreement would improve the atmosphere between Russia and Japan, I replied that there were no objections against the conclusions of such purely commercial treaties.

Hence, what I said to MATSUOKA at the time unmistakably revealed that I did not consider the conclusion of a Japanese-Russian Treaty of Non-Aggression or Neutrality Pact to be suitable. The news of the conclusion of the Pact therefore came as a surprise to me. However, I refrained at the time from making this known to MATSUOKA.

Even now there would be no sense in pointing out to MATSUOKA the incorrectness of the statement which he made to you at the time as well as to point to the fact that with the concluding of the Pact, he has surprised the German Government with a fait accompli. I am nevertheless informing you of the actual course of events because during your future political conversations, there may arise the chance to rectify this point to MATSUOKA in a suitable way, should it be deemed useful.

In the same way, there may be an occasion in the further course of events to remind MATSUOKA that during the same conversation in which he discussed the conclusion of the Japanese-Soviet Treaty with you, he made the following noteworthy statement: "Should Germany come to blows with the Soviet Union, no Japanese Premier or Foreign Minister would ever be able to keep Japan neutral. In this case Japan would be driven by the force of necessity to attack Russia at the side of Germany. No Neutrality Pact could alter any of this."

Should you deem it advisable occasionally to draw attention to both of the points, please do it in a very gentle manner so that MATSUOKA will not receive the impression that I wish to take him to task on these matters.

RIBBENTROP

Document No. 4062 G

Certificate:-

I, Ulrich Straus, hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the German and English languages, and as a result of the comparison between the German and the English texts, I have established that this is a true and correct translation of International Prosecution Document No. 4062 G.

/s/ Ulrich A. Straus

AFFIDAVIT

I, W. P. Cuning, being first duly sworn on oath, depose and say:

1. That I am an Attache of the United States Department of State on the Staff of the United States Political Adviser on German Affairs, and as such I am a representative of the Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.). That in my capacity as above set forth, I have in my possession, custody, and control at the Berlin Documents Center, Berlin, Germany, the original captured German Foreign Office files and archives.

2. That said original Foreign Office files and archives were captured and obtained by military forces under the command of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces, and upon their seizure and capture were first assembled by said military forces at a Military Document Center at Marburg, Germany, and were later moved by authorized personnel of said Allied forces to said central documents center, above referred to, and known as the Berlin Documents Center.

3. That I was assigned to said document center at Marburg, Germany, on August 15, 1945; and said captured German Foreign Office files and archives first came into my possession and control while I was stationed at Marburg, Germany, and that thereafter the same have continued in my possession and custody and under my control.

4. That the document to which this affidavit is attached is a true and correct photostatic copy of an original German Foreign Office document which was captured from said German Foreign Office files and archives, and which came into my possession and custody and under my control in the manner above set forth.

5. That said original document, of which the attached is a photostatic copy, is being held and retained by me in order that it may be examined and inspected by various interested agencies, and a photostatic copy of said original is hereby furnished and certified to because of the unavailability of said original for the reasons above set forth.

s/ W. P. Cuning
W. P. CUNING

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 25th day of April 1946.

s/ G. H. GARDE
G. H. GARDE
Lt. Colonel, AGO
Acting Adjutant General

OFFICE OF MILITARY
GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY (U.S.)